The Extramural Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Cyrene, Libya. Final Reports, Volume VIII: The Sanctuary's Imperial Architectural Development, Conflict with Christianity, and Final Days. By White D. with Reynolds J. (2012) (University Museum Monograph 134). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, for The Libyan Department of Antiquities, Tripoli.

Review of: White, D. with Reynolds, J. (2012) *The Extramural Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Cyrene, Libya. Final Reports, Volume VIII: The Sanctuary's Imperial Architectural Development, Conflict with Christianity, and Final Days* (University Museum Monograph 134). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, for The Libyan Department of Antiquities, Tripoli. *240 pages, 110 illustrations*.

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This is the eight instalment in the series of publications of the Pennsylvania Expedition's excavations at the Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Cyrene. It is also, effectively, the sequel to the fifth volume of this series, which dealt with the architecture of the sanctuary prior to the Roman period. The history of the Pennsylvania Expedition is itself a turbulent one. Following nine years of excavation, between 1968 and 1978, and two study seasons, in 1979 and 1981, the project was axed by the Libyan authorities, as relations with the US deteriorated. This had, as Donald White puts it, with marked understatement, 'a predictably negative impact on the orderly flow of publication' (2). The fact that any of any of the volumes in this series have appeared at all is to the eternal credit of the excavation team, but this sudden cessation of the excavations necessarily left numerous questions unanswered – a point White repeatedly stresses.

The volume is broken into four main sections, bookended by introduction and conclusion. The first three of these examine the architectural remains between 31 BC and AD 115, AD 115 and 262, and AD 262 and 365 respectively. Each is further divided into sub-parts and prefaced with a short historical discussion. The fourth section, meanwhile, consists of an interesting assessment of the evidence for iconoclasm at the site during its final phase of existence. An appendix, documenting a choice selection on inscriptions from the complex, is provided by Joyce Reynolds.

At its core, this is a meticulous architectural study which precisely catalogues the modifications made to the sanctuary through the Roman period. In the first and second centuries AD the picture is relatively clear: this venerable complex continued to be both lovingly cared for and significantly updated. Several of the existing Sacred Houses were restored and new additions fitted around them. Between 31 BC to AD 115 (I: Part 2), a lower terrace to the north was added, a bridge built across the Wadi bel Gadir, and a major new colonnaded building erected on the upper terrace. Whether stoa or mystery hall (telesterion or thesmophorion), as White hypothesises, the building provided a new focal point within the Roman-period sanctuary without impinging of the existing Sacred Houses. Remarkably the sanctuary appears to have survived the Jewish Rebellion of AD 115–17 unmolested and indeed blossomed in the succeeding years (II: Part 1). A new suite of buildings was added to the upper terrace, including a monumental propylaeum, and the number of sculptural dedications peak in the mid 2nd century.

Exactly when these various second-century developments occurred is unknown; indeed it is a minor shortcoming of the volume that dating evidence is not discussed in detail. What is more clear is that activity at the sanctuary declined significantly in the 3rd century (II: Part 2). Sculptural dedications dry up and only two third-century coins were recovered from stratified contexts. At some point, after AD 251–3 to judge from the coin finds, the complex was totally levelled. White attributes this destruction to an earthquake in AD 262, an assertion he has defended elsewhere, most notably against Roques.[i] The scale and character of the devastation bears all the hallmarks of a major seismic event. More 'baffling', as White puts it (126), is the fact that most of the buildings on the upper terrace had their floors removed and internal surfaces dug out prior to this event. Two explanations for this are put forward: refurbishment or robbing of building materials. White tentatively argues for robbing but since the walls of these structures are left in place this seems implausible. Refurbishment of some sort is more likely but so little survives of the superstructures that we have no way of knowing the broader context of this work.

The final two sections of this volume are devoted to unravelling the final phases of the site's history, prior to its total devastation by the earthquake of AD 365. The first of these (III: Part 1–3) focuses on the only significant building work, the erection of an ambiguous rubble 'mound' and a series of unconnected walls. This mound is intriguing. Bounded by well-built walls it contained numerous pieces of sculpture and was probably erected in the 4th century AD, to judge

from coins found beneath its walls. While it might result simply from clean-up work, White also moots a possible ritual function, an idea that is run with for the remainder of the volume. A full inventory of the sculpture from the mound is provided, several of which appear to have been deliberately mutilated; two headless life-size female statues were also found built into the mound's walls. The deliberateness of these statues' placing – both face down, orientated East – is open for debate but White rightly raises the question of whether this mound is actually a more carefully planned structure than first appears: could it represent a considered burial of sacred sculptures either by Cyrene's pagan population for their protection or the city's Christians to nullify their powers?

The issue of iconoclasm receives a more thorough airing in the subsequent section (IV: Part 1-3). A useful list of all apparently mutilated sculpture from the site is provided: thirteen heads, most with their sensory organs damaged, a further three fragments, and three reliefs. Gouged eyes are common but only three heads are illustrated and further analysis will have to wait for Susan Kane's full publication of the sculpture. This material certainly keys into debates about statuary mutilation more generally. Close parallels are provided by finds from the Temple of Allat-Athena at Palmyra and especially the Sanctuary of Demeter on the Acrocorinth.[ii] While Christians remain the likely culprits (for White this is 'beyond dispute' (168)), no inscribed crosses or Christian graffiti were found at the sanctuary. The chronology of this iconoclasm is also vague, seemingly earlier than the examples from Palmyra and Corinth, as is its purpose: if it is post AD 262, then those responsible would have been picking among ruins, attacking sculpture that had probably already been destroyed. While this new material provides more questions than answers it constitutes an important new dataset for scholars working on the practice of iconoclasm.

In the conclusion to this volume White draws together a number of the issues raised by the Pennsylvania excavations. In particular, the location and layout of the sanctuary in comparison with Demeter sanctuaries elsewhere is explored, helping the reader to contextualise this fascinating complex. Ultimately this volume provides a thorough and insightful overview of the Roman development the Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone, which will appeal to anyone interested in Roman Cyrene, the cult of Demeter, or sculptural iconoclasm. It is clear and concise throughout, well-illustrated with both photographs and drawings, many of them by David Hopkins, to whom it is a fitting memorial. It should be noted that this volume is very much one of a series; it needs to be read with the other volumes to hand, since references to the site grid, trench locations, and finds can be confusing otherwise. Equally, the inscriptions included in the appendix are a taster, and not much more, of what we can expect when the full version of the Inscriptions of Roman Cyrenaica is made accessible online via King's College London.

At the end of the conclusion, White dwells on 'the troubling sense of incompleteness which can accompany this kind of research' (179). Further work, had it been possible, could potentially have added more secure dating evidence and clarified the function of the major Roman-period buildings on the upper terrace. White also queries the relationship between the sanctuary and its surroundings, especially possible connections (about which he is sceptical) with the site recently excavated by Luni;[iii] the monumental staircase just to the south has recently been discussed in this journal.[iv] In the end, these are questions for others volumes to answer. The more pressing issue is safeguarding the site, in the face of a rise in illegal excavation, to ensure that the evidence on which these questions hinge remains intact.

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[i] White, D. 1996. 'Fresh reverberations from Cyrene's later antique earthquakes', in *Studi miscellanei: scritti di antichità in onore di Sandro Stucchi*. Università di Roma La Sapienza, Rome: 317–26, *contra* Roques, D. 1987. *Synésios de Cyrène et la Cyrénaïque du bas-empire*. Editions de CNRS, Paris.

[ii] Trombley, F. 2001. *Hellenic Religion and Christianization, c. 370–529*. Brill, Leiden and Boston: vol. 1, 146; Rothaus, R. 2000. *Corinth: The First City of Greece. An Urban History of Antique Cult and Religion*. Brill, Leiden and Boston: 123.

[iii] Luni, M. *et al*. 2006. 'Il nuovo santuario extraurbano di Demetra', in M. Luni (ed.), *Cirene, Atene d'Africa*. 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, Rome: 147–70 (esp. 153–4).

[iv] White, D. 2011. 'Applebaum's hillside stairs at Cyrene', with a postscript by P. Kenrick, *Libyan Studies* 42: 21–32.